

EXPRESSING CONCERN WITH U.S.
FOREIGN POLICY FAILURE TO-
WARDS THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 30, 2022

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address the massive U.S. failure under the Biden Administration in allowing the Solomon Islands to align with China. The Solomon Islands' shift towards Beijing was not out of the blue as it is the product of a several year effort. Further, the Solomon Islands contains the blood of over 10,000 U.S. Marines who died retaking it from the Japanese, including the infamous battle at Guadalcanal. Thousands of others were maimed and wounded. What our grandfathers paid for in blood, the Chinese have bought with money. This is a national disgrace and we were entirely unprepared for such a significant development in the Pacific Ocean.

This strategic shift truly began in September of 2019 when Prime Minister Sogavare announced the Solomon Islands was switching its 36 year diplomatic ties from Taiwan to China. With no embassy in the country, the U.S. response was limited however the then Trump Administration offered an aid package to the island of Malaita, the nation's largest province, which is openly out spoken against the diplomatic change.

Shortly after the cessation of the failed Afghanistan withdrawal, China increased its meddling in the Solomon Islands. When the people of Malaita were refused an audience before Prime Minister Sogavare violent riots broke out across the capital. While U.S. allies responded at first, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) soon filled the gap with their own police and police gear.

To any international observer the CCP strategy is clear. Shift allegiances, make the Solomon Islands politically and economically dependent on Beijing through Belt and Road Initiative investment and projects, and make the Solomon Islands' government security based on CCP personnel and equipment. Yet there is no action from the Biden Administration. Finally, in February 2020, three years after the Solomon Island's shift from Taiwan, the Biden Administration announced its Indo-Pacific Strategy and Secretary Blinken states that the U.S. will reopen an embassy. This is much too late.

Just last week, Solomon Island officials confirm that a police deal has been signed with China and that a larger security deal is in the finalization phase. The deal grants Chinese police and security the right to assist the security of the island and to protect Chinese personnel and projects there. It would, most concerningly, allow People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy ships to carry out logistical stops at the island, which likely opens the door to a PLA naval base on the Solomon Island, 1,400 miles from our ally Australia and extending the CCP's military reach and influence towards the U.S. and its allies.

We are watching the CCP's soft and hard power operate in real time, blending its growing economic, political, and military might to slowly take control of a country, creeping closer to becoming a regional hegemon in an ocean the U.S. shares a border with and did

\$1.75 trillion in two way trade and whose economy accounts for 60 percent of the global GDP.

The reality is that Biden Administration has been wrong or too slow on every major foreign policy issue since taking office. The failure of this Administration with the Solomon Islands proves it cannot walk and chew gum at the same time, distracted by its failed withdrawal operation in Afghanistan, paralyzed by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, distracted with re-entering into a diplomatic deal which makes concessions with the world's state sponsor of terrorism, or too focused on entering into abstract climate and tax deals with foreign nations and international organizations.

For decades, the American people were told by our governing and economic elites that the People's Republic of China under the CCP was not a threat. That it would develop and align with the West. Yet, we have watched China pursue hegemonic dominance in the Indo-Pacific, using this regional security to project power globally in a manner which threatens American economic, political, and national security. But all we get from the Biden Administration is strategy documents and diplomatic action which is far too late as Beijing eyes 2049 and the end of its 100 year marathon.

Madam Speaker, I recount this series of concerning events not to advocate for U.S. intervention. I highlight these developments to show how the Biden Administration has been completely unable or unwilling to use the wide range of America's tools of statecraft to address a real security threat, growing Chinese power and influence. Instead it is off pursuing highly political and abstract foreign policy goals which do much less for the security of the American people, homeland, and way of life. The ease at which the CCP has obtained complete influence over another nation in a strategically important region of the world highlights its growing power and how this Congress and Administration needs to get serious about its foreign policy responsibilities.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FRIENDS OF THE NEW YORK STATE MILITARY MUSEUM'S VIETNAM WAR VETERANS COMMEMORATION

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 30, 2022

Ms. STEFANIK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 50th anniversary of the Friends of the New York State Military Museum's Vietnam War Veterans Commemoration, honoring all the men and women who served our Nation during the Vietnam War.

The Friends of the New York State Military Museum is a nonprofit organization that assists the museum in telling the story of America's military. For fifty years, this organization has held commemoration ceremonies to honor the Vietnam War veterans who served between November 1, 1955 and May 15, 1975. They graciously award lapel pins that celebrate the brave sacrifices of the servicemen and women who spent time on active duty in both training and combat. For far too long, our Vietnam veterans have gone unheralded for

their immense bravery during this crucial time in our nation's history. They returned home injured and scarred by the horrors of war yet did not receive the gratitude of their fellow citizens.

The New York State Military Museum began their mission to preserve and interpret history in 1863. With the help of the Friends of the New York State Military Museum, they have been able to tell countless stories of our brave men and women in uniform. Acting as docents, retail associates, and research library volunteers, the Friends of the New York State Military Museum finds numerous ways to support museum operations daily. The museum holds over ten thousand artifacts and boasts impressive research and education programs. With their assistance, this museum has been able to effectively honor all those that sacrificed their lives to protect democracy both at home and abroad.

On behalf of New York's 21st District, I want to congratulate the Friends of the New York State Military Museum on their fifty years of loyal service to our veterans of the Vietnam War. And I want to thank the many North Country residents that selflessly dedicated their lives to our Nation's armed services.

IN RECOGNITION OF JORDAN WILSON'S SERVICE TO VIRGINIA'S FIRST DISTRICT

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 30, 2022

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Jordan Wilson and his service to my office, Virginia's First District, and the Nation.

Jordan joined my office in September 2016 and has diligently worked his way up from an intern to Director of Operations, striving for excellence in every task along the way. As Staff Assistant, Jordan improved our constituent services program; as Legislative Correspondent, he reformed our letter writing process; and finally, as Director of Operations, he developed processes to streamline my office's operations and worked to pursue my priorities coordinating and creating a schedule to maximize my time.

Jordan has gone above and beyond to contribute to additional duties outside of my office as well. He has taught over 330 Hill staff through the Congressional Staff Academy's Superior Scheduling training and has become a singular hub for questions, concerns, and assistance for schedulers across the House and Senate. Further, Jordan served on the Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies in 2020–2021, where he served a crucial role in setting up COVID testing operations to ensure our Nation's leaders were safe, ultimately contributing to the success of Inauguration Day.

I would like to thank Jordan for his contributions over the last 6.5 years. He has been a key member of my staff in every role he has taken up and contributed to the positive office culture that my office strives for. I wish Jordan the best as he continues his journey in public service as the Director of Member Services for the Committee on House Administration.

Madam Speaker, I ask you to join me in recognizing Jordan Wilson for his dedication to